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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : Amembassy MOSCOW

738
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

APR 26 61
DATE
April 23, 1961

REF : Embassy Despatch No. 720, April 21, 1961

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	INR-10	REP-1, RM/R-2, ICA-11, CIA-5, EUR-5, S/P-1, B/CEA-1, S/B-1
	REC'D 5/4	INFO OTHER USIA-11, OSD-2, ARMY-35, NAVY-20, AIR-15, NSA-4, CIA-16

SUBJECT: JOINT WEEKA NO. 17

NSC-2

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MILITARY

Negative

Action Assigned to: Ofc II
Action Taken: Noted
Date of Action: 5/5/61
Action Office Symbol: ICA
Name of Officer: CRBowie
Disposition: DC/R: Fl

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EXTERNAL

1. (OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Cuba and Khrushchev Letter to President Kennedy. Following Castro's announcement on April 20 that the "intervention" had been crushed, Soviet propaganda began a concentrated effort to exploit the failure of the attempted landing as a major defeat for the US, while at the same time warning that further attempts are to be expected, including direct US intervention.

Khrushchev's letter to the President on April 22, published together with the President's letter of April 18, set the line for Soviet propaganda. Jubilant accounts from TASS Havana on the "great victory" of the Cuban revolution were published in all papers, and a film entitled "Island of Freedom" opened in several Moscow cinemas. A major effort was devoted to establish US complicity in the "intervention" including press accounts of confessions by captured "mutineers," claims that US Navy ships transported the landing forces, and a report that a US pilot was shot down over Cuba. Soviet claims that the US intends to intervene directly in Cuba have continued and have been buttressed in Soviet propaganda by such reports as the statement by Presidential Assistant B rle that the struggle will be continued, a report from the Mexican press that U S authorities planned a faked attack against Guantanamo by American agents in order to justify direct intervention, the reported presence of a "mighty armada" off Cuba. Khrushchev's letter was acclaimed as a "historic document" which had played a vital role in supporting the Cuban people in their struggle against imperialist intervention.

2. (CONFIDENTIAL) Laos. In publishing the Gromyko-Home letters, dated April 24, concerning a ceasefire, the ICC, and an international conference to open May 12, the Soviet press left the impression that a peaceful solution to the Laotian crisis is at hand. Nothing has been reported of difficulties which may complicate or prevent a peaceful solution, such as a failure to achieve a cease-fire before May 12, or last minute military action which could alter the situation sharply in Laos. The Soviet press has been silent on official US and British reservations about attending an international conference unless a ceasefire actually is achieved.

Although Souvanna Phouma gave Western diplomats in Moscow the impression that he was hopeful of a solution and optimistic of his ability to keep the Pathet Lao in check, the joint communique on his visit published after his departure for Peiping on April 22 was openly anti-US in tone, expressed agreement with the USSR on broad international topics, and included a condemnation of US actions regarding Cuba. As Souvanna continued his trip to Communist China and the DRV, the Soviet press printed statements he reportedly made which seemed to place him progressively closer to communist positions and further away from genuine neutrality.

On April 21 the Soviet press announced the NLHX leader Souphanuvong and "Minister of Education" Quinim Pholsena arrived in Moscow (no date given). Although these persons were not treated in published material as members of Souvanna's party, Souphanuvong said in a statement for the press that he had come to join the "Royal Lao Delegation" headed by Souvanna and he was mentioned in the joint communique as having participated in official functions.

3. (OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Algerian Putsch. The attempted revolt by French military elements in Algeria was widely reported in the Soviet press which condemned the "ultras" as fascists, criticized General de Gaulle's handling of the revolts, and claimed the collapse of the revolt resulted from the solidarity of the French masses (with the Communist Party in the fore) in opposing the putsch. General de Gaulle was criticized for having failed to act against the "ultras" long before the revolt, delaying negotiations with the FLN, and refusing to issue arms to "the workers" when an invasion of Paris from Algeria seemed imminent.

Throughout the detailed Soviet coverage of developments, the role of the CPF in organizing the "democratic elements" of France in opposition to the putsch was highlighted. In an "Observer" article April 25, Pravda charged the the "ultras" were receiving the backing of the imperialist-monopolist camp, and at one point referred to a Salazar-Franco-Allen Dulles axis supporting the revolt.

The fourth French atomic test was reported in a one-line news announcement without comment.

4. (BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL) Visits. Burmese Commander-in-Chief Ne Win left the USSR April 22 after a visit of more than three weeks. His speech at a concluding Moscow reception April 20 was a dignified and diplomatic statement which, in contrast to statements made by some Asian and African visitors, contained nothing which could be interpreted as praise for the Soviet system as such. He expressed the hope that he would be able to reciprocate hospitality to Marshal Malinovsky and his wife in Burma, but there was no indication of firm dates for a Soviet return visit.

The Embassy has been informed that there were no substantive discussions or agreements of any kind between the two sides during the visit, and that, in particular, Laos was not discussed. Whether Ne Win will resume his planned visits to other Eastern European countries and West Germany apparently depends on the results of his operation. (END CONFIDENTIAL)

(BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) Three Brazilian delegations have been reported in the press as arriving recently in the USSR. Pravda (Apr. 25) reported the arrival of a trade delegation headed by the director of the Department for Economic Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P. Leao de Moura. De Moura was stated to have discussed a Soviet-Brazilian trade and payments agreement for 1960-62 with Soviet foreign trade officials. Two Brazilian deputies, E. Ramos and C. Andrade, arrived April 24 as guests of a Soviet parliamentary committee. The press had previously announced the arrival of the secretary general of the Brazilian Council for Cultural Questions, Mano Pedrova, to discuss Soviet participation in the Sao Palo international art and architecture exhibit next fall.

A joint Soviet-Somali communique published in Pravda (Apr. 24) on the visit to Somali earlier in the month by a Soviet "good will" mission stated that Prime Minister Abdi Rashid Ali Shermark had accepted an invitation to visit the USSR, the date to be settled through diplomatic channels. There was no mention of a Khrushchev return visit.

Agreement on an exchange of visits by the Soviet and Yugoslav foreign ministers was reported in Pravda (Apr. 26). Foreign Minister Popovich would, it was stated, be in the USSR in the first half of May. No date was given for Gromyko's visit.

A "forthcoming" exchange of visits by Khrushchev and King Hassan II of Morocco was also announced in Pravda (Apr. 26), the dates to be settled through diplomatic channels. The agreement on the exchange apparently replaced the invitation to Hassan to attend the May Day celebrations extended during Brezhnev's Moroccan visit before the death of Mohammed V. (END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

(BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL) The Embassy has learned that a Ghanaian military delegation will be present in Moscow for the May Day celebrations. No further details were immediately available. (END CONFIDENTIAL)

INTERNAL

5. (OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Leadership. On April 22, a commemorative meeting at the Bolshoi Theatre in honor of the 91st birthday of Lenin provided the occasion for the only publicized group gathering of the Central Committee Presidium in Moscow this past week. M.A. Suslov, recently returned from India, opened the meeting but the honor of delivering the main speech went to Moscow City First Secretary P.N. Demichev (not on Presidium). N.S. Khrushchev and A.I. Mikoyan were not present, continuing their vacation in Sochi. The exact whereabouts during the week of Central Committee Secretary F.R. Kozlov was not revealed. Sometimes said to be Khrushchev's "right-hand" in the party, Kozlov may also be in Sochi, but did not attend with Mikoyan the dinner which Khrushchev gave German Federal Republic Ambassador Kroll on April 24.

RSFSR "Premier" D.S. Polyanskiy, continued the tour of the provinces begun last week. He attended a meeting of party activists in Penza on April 21 and a Novosibirsk Oblast Party plenum on April 25. Abbreviated reports of these meetings suggest that his trip is related to the positive side of achieving good agricultural leadership by encouraging extra efforts during the current sowing season rather than to organizational or personnel problems.

Nominal "Chief of State" L.I. Brezhnev has accepted an invitation to visit Finland September 12-20. In two May Day portrait displays seen thus far, the relative fall from grace of Presidium member and Soviet Ambassador to Warsaw A.B. Aristov seems reflected by the appearance of his portrait last of all Presidium full members in one instance and sharing this low position status with that of N.M. Shvernik in the other.

6. (OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Placing of Released Officers Still a Problem. The Red Star editorial of April 27 admits the continuation of a serious problem in finding suitable civilian jobs and housing for officers released from active duty in the armed forces, and provides additional evidence that the reduction-in-force decreed January 15, 1960 is still far from complete. Noting that many officers and generals are being released, it deplores the fact that a significant

part make their way to the big cities of the south or center of the European USSR, creating such concentrations in some cities as to complicate seriously the efforts of local organs to place and house them. This is blamed largely on inadequacies of "explanatory work" directed at persuading the officers that their greatest opportunity for happiness and service lies in permanent work at construction sites and factories in the North, Urals, and Siberia, and on collective and state farms in the virgin lands areas. Conceding that not every reserve or retired officer is of an age or health suitable for work in factories and farms, the editor states that all must be drawn into socially useful labor of one sort or another.

The first half of the editorial, citing positive examples of former officers who have made names for themselves in agricultural work, commenced with a reference to the reserve lieutenant colonel whose letter N.S. Khrushchev had read in the course of his speech at Sverdlovsk March 2. However, nothing was said of the basic proposal made by the writer (which Khrushchev said would be studied) for establishing special one-year schools or courses to prepare released middle-aged officers for responsible posts in agriculture.

7. (OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Lenin's 91st Birthday and the Lenin Prizes. The 91st anniversary of Lenin's birth April 22 was given heavy attention by Soviet media. Not a paper in the central or Republic press was without a large picture and several pages of historical photos, laudatory prose, and poems of tribute. Commemorative meetings addressed by local party personages were held throughout the country, and a special postage stamp was issued. As customary, the list of recipients of Lenin prizes for the arts, sciences, and related fields was released the same day. As anticipated since their nomination for the honor, pianist S.T. Rikhter (for concert activities) and writer A.T. Tvardovskiy (for his poem "Space Beyond Space" -- which included a revealing critique of Stalin excesses) were so honored.

The list of successful candidates also provides evidence of the significant contribution made to the Soviet arts and sciences by Soviet Jews. Although the latter account for only a little over 1 percent of the population, 8 percent of the prize recipients were Jews (among them the Soviet scientist A.F. Ioffe, whose picture was prominently displayed in all papers). The fact that members of the Jewish intelligentia have received generous recognition in the awards list will help the regime counter charges of anti-semitism here.

MILITARY

Negative.

For the Ambassador:

Boris H. Klosson

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Counselor for Political Affairs

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